Mons. Beaucaire

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long been distinguished by his attentions, and he had come brilliantly out of his episode of the Frenchman, who had been his only rival. Wherever they went, there arose a buzz of pleasing gossip and adulation.

Mr. Nash, seeing them near him, came forward with greetings. A word on the side passed between the nobleman and the exquisite.

"I had news of the rascal to-night," whispered Nash. "He lay at a farm till yesterday, when he disappeared; his ruffians, too."

"You have arranged?" asked the Duke.

"Fourteen bailiffs are watching without. He could not come within gunshot. If they clap eyes on him, they will hustle him to jail, and his cutthroats shall not avail him a hair's weight. The impertinent swore he'd be here by nine, did he?"

"He said so; and 'tis a rash dog, sir."

"It is just nine now."

"Send out to see if they have taken him."

"Gladly." The Beau beckoned an attendant, and whispered in his ear.

Many of the crowd had edged up to the two gentlemen with apparent carelessness, to overhear their conversation. Those who did overhear repeated it in covert asides, and this circulating undertone, confirming a vague rumor that Beaucaire would attempt the entrance that night, lent a pleasurable color of excitement to the evening.

The French prince, the ambassador, and their suites were announced. Polite as the assembly was, it was also curious, and there occurred a mannerly rush to see the newcomers. Lady Mary, already pale, grew whiter as the throng closed around her; she looked up pathetically at the Duke, who lost no time in extricating her from the pressure.

"Wait here," he said; "I will fetch you a glass of negus," and disappeared. He had not thought to bring a chair, and she, looking about with an increasing faintness and finding none, saw that she was standing by the door of a small side-room. The crowd swerved back for the passage of the legate of France, and presed upon her. She opened the door and went in.

The room was empty save for two gentlemen, who were quietly playing cards at a table. They looked up as she entered. They were M. Beaucaire and Mr. Molyneux.

She uttered a quick cry and leaned against the wall, her hand to her breast. Beaucaire, though white and weak, had brought her a chair before Molyneux could stir.

"Mademoiselle——"

"Do not touch me!" she said, with such frozen abhorrence in her voice that he stopped short. "Mr. Molyneux, you seek strange company!"

"Madam," replied Molyneux, bowing deeply, as much to Beaucaire as to herself, "I am honored by the presence of both of you."

"Oh, are you mad?" she exclaimed, contemptuously.

"This gentleman has exalted me with his confidence, madam," he replied.

"Will you add your ruin to the scandal of this fellow's presence here? How he obtained entrance——"

"Pardon, mademoiselle," interrupted Beaucaire. "Did I not say I should come? M. Molyneux was so obliging as to answer for me to the fourteen friens of M. de Winterset and Meestaire Nash."

"Do you not know," she turned vehemently upon Molyneux, "that he will be removed the moment I leave this room? Do you wish to be dragged out with him? For your sake, sir, because I have always thought you a man of heart, I give you a chance to save yourself from disgrace—and—your companion from jail. Let him slip out by some retired way, and you may give me your arm and we will enter the next room as if nothing had happened. Come, sir——"

"Mademoiselle——"

"Mr. Molyneux, I desire to hear nothing from your companion. Had I not seen you at cards with him I should have supposed him in attendance as your lackey. Do you desire to take advantage of my offer, sir?"

"Mademoiselle, I could not tell you, on that night——"

"You may inform your high-born friend, Mr. Molyneux, that I heard everything he had to say; that my pride once had the pleasure of listening to his high-born confession!"

"Ah, it is gentle to taunt one with his birth, mademoiselle? Ah, no! There is a man in my country who say strange things of that—that a man is not his father, but himself."

"You may inform your friend, Mr. Molyneux that he had a chance to defend himself against accusation; that he said all——"

"That I did say all I could have strength to say. Mademoiselle, you did not see—as it was right—that I had been stung by a big wasp. It was nothing, a scratch; but, mademoiselle, the sky went round and the moon dance' on the earth. I could not wish that big wasp to see he had stung me; so I mus' only say what I can have strength for, and stan' straight till he is gone. Beside,' there are other rizzons. Ah, you mus' belief! My Molyneux I sen' for, and tell him all, because he show courtesy to the yo'ng Frenchman, and I can trus' him. I trus' you, mademoiselle—long ago—and would have tol' you ev'rything, excep' just because—well, for the romance, the fon! You belief? It is so clearly so; you do belief, mademoiselle?"

She did not even look at him. M. Beaucaire lifted his hand appealingly toward her. "Can there be no faith in—in—" he said timidly, and paused. She was silent, a statue, my Lady Disdain.

"If you had not belief' me to be an imposter; if I had never said I was Chateaurien; if I had been jus' that Monsieur Beaucaire of the story they tol' you, but never with the heart of a lackey, an hones' man, a man, the man who knew, himself, could you—would you—" He was trying to speak firmly, yet, as he gazed upon her splendid beauty, he choked slightly, and fumbled in the lace at his throat with unsteady fingers—"Would you—have let me ride by your side in the autumn moonlight?" Her glance passed him as it might have passed by a footman or a piece of furniture. He was dressed magnificently, a multitude of orders glittering on his breast. Her eye took no knowledge of him.

"Mademoiselle—I have the honor to ask you: if you had known this Beaucaire was hones', though of peasant birth, would you——"

Involuntarily, controlled as her icy presence was, she shuddered. There was a moment of silence.

"Mr. Molyneux," said Lady Mary, "in spite of your discourtesy in allowing a servant to address me, I offer you a last chance to leave this room undisgraced. Will you give me your arm?"

"Pardon me, madam," said Mr. Molyneux.

Beaucaire dropped into a chair with his head bent low and his arm outstretched on the table; his eyes filled slowly in spite of himself, and two tears rolled down the young man's cheeks.

"An' live men are jus'—names!" said M. Beaucaire.

(CONTINUED NEXT WEEK.)

Been Thinking

(Continued from Third Page)

lutely startling news. You, have never given a cent to any one in your life, as I understand it?"

"Never, unless I was sure that I would get two cents in return," said Jabez, with a proud smile.

"Then I suggest that you give your money to some institution that is already heavily endowed and that will thus be worthy of your unexampled generosity." And the reporter named such an institution.

Then he took down in great detail all the facts in the life of Jabez as seen by the millionaire himself, getting thereby a picture of the man that no one else in the wide world would have painted, and worth at least six columns to the reporter, who had it all for the mere taking down in shorthand.

The reporter was of a grateful disposition and, knowing that this interview would spell success for him, he wished to make a return to Jabez, and being not only grateful but also waggish, the form of his return was as follows:

"Mr. Holtite," said he, "charity is charity, and a good deed much blown about penetrates to remote places and is put to the credit of the doer of the deed; but if the good deed can be made to bear immediate fruit, if your bread comes back on the return wave, so to speak, you will probably stand for a long time on the beach chucking loaves into the sea."

"Go on," said Jabez; "I am listening."

"My idea is," said the reporter, "and I hope you will take my frankness in the proper spirit, that the public would as soon believe that Roosevelt was a figure-head, or that William of Germany was a puppet, as that you, Jabez Holtite, would actually give away money, and I think there are thousands in this great city who would gladly give a dollar apiece to see you in the act."

"Ah, they know I am a wonder as an acquisitor," said Jabez, mentally hugging himself.

"Sure," said the reporter. "Now why not hire Madison Square Garden, erect a platform in the middle of the arena and give away a thousand dollars every hour on the stroke of the clock? You might also give them a fifteen-minute talk on how to become a millionaire on a capital of two cents and an atrophied conscience. You catch my point?"

"Why, certainly," said Jabez. "Young man, you have a brilliant future."

The whole world knows the result. Madison Square Garden was crowded every hour at a dollar a head.

And every hour, at the stroke of the clock, Jabez Holtite gave to well-known and influential institutions a thousand dollars and a fifteen-minute talk worth a thousand more to persons with the proper consciences, and he felt that it was well worth giving when the gate receipts were so large.

He came to think that it would have been better for him if he had begun to give sooner in life, and his mouth grew less hard solely from the human feelings that surged up in his heart every time he handed out a check for a thousand dollars and realized that the Garden was packed at a dollar per.

At the end of the week he had given away $50,000 and had taken in $500,000, and then, to show that his regeneration was genuine, he hired the Garden for another week and doubled the price of admission, doubling also his gift.

And to show that he was no ingrate he gave the reporter a season pass and allowed him to interview him every day. And at times he could hear his own heart beat, and then he knew that he had become generous. And his reputation as a cheerful giver was almost as great at the end of the second week as his former reputation for meanness.

It all depends upon the way it's done.